

## Featured Banquet Speaker Karen Watson



Meet Karen Watson, author of *Being Black and Republican in the Age of Obama*, and founder of [GOPBuzz](#), a website and blog committed to offering information about Republican-related events. For newcomers and political neophytes, GOPBuzz is a portal to find conservative events near them; and for candidates, it is one way to expand the audience for events beyond the party faithful. Karen also has her own mortgage company and is quite successful with all of her ventures. You can purchase her book (a fast and short 73 page read) on Amazon or on her [GOPBuzz website](#).

Karen's book title says a lot about her and the book's content. It chronicles the thoughts and reactions of conservative black Americans to the political environment that expects black Americans to be Democrats. Turns out the surprise and sometimes disdain for the idea that some blacks choose to be conservative comes from family and friends, not just strangers.

Karen has always been Republican, and points to her family's hard work ethic as among the sources of her political leanings. There was never a sense that someone owed you something in her family's political conversation, nor was there a belief that the government was there to save you from your troubles.

Here are a few gems from an interview with Karen:

- During her college years in New York City, she was bombarded with questions about why she was a black Republican, to which in part her answer was why is blue blue? Why is this something requiring explanation?
- In those NYC years she saw the devastation that entitlement programs inflict on poor African Americans and all poor people, including that they damaged their psyche or sense of self-worth.
- While she lived under President Bill Clinton and disliked some aspects of his presidency, she never saw him as a socialist, whereas she sees President Obama in that light and as one who overreaches, expands government too much.

Karen's examples of Obama's wrong and dangerous ideas, and overreach, include:

- His dangerous rhetoric always designed to divide Americans (us vs. them, and the fair share rhetoric) which is extremely dangerous to the fabric of America
- Passage of Obamacare that will only result in healthcare costing more, being less available and of lower quality
- The Dodd-Frank bill's intrusion of government into the financial sector
- Drones creating alarm in society
- Benghazi and the administration's failure to ever come clean and tell Americans what happened.
- The labeling of the Ft. Hood terrorist attack as a workplace violence incident fails to deal honestly with Americans
- Susan Rice falsely claiming that a video caused the Benghazi attack
- Increased attacks on gun owners and Second Amendment rights

Karen offered some insights on government assistance programs that the American Left perpetually creates and grows:

- Entitlement programs make people dependent; therefore they reduce your freedom and inhibit or block your talents from being shared with the world.
- The false underpinning of these programs is that they'll make life "fair," but it cannot be. Absolute fairness doesn't exist, but opportunity does.
- Programs create and feed the politics of envy. • America needs the talents and gifts each individual has to offer, and those gifts are stymied in a life of government dependence. • Don't look at low-paying "starter jobs" as unfair in compensation, look at them as a stepping stone along the path upward

Karen urged that we conservatives really need to rescue America from the liberal agenda of high taxes, big government and massive government dependency. She spoke of people's lives and dreams being diminished, and observed that people are checking out of society. And that's a problem because we need every member of society on board, contributing his or her gifts and talents to the economy.

Karen's observations were both poignant and simple. Her insights into the impact of the social spending "sold" to the American people as compassionate but which is in reality bitterly demoralizing resonate with Americans of all backgrounds who see that we deserve better. We deserve programs and policies that are designed to lift up, to offer a hand up to our fellow Americans who are just waiting to launch their lives.